

CLAIMS

Please cancel claims 14 and 25-48 without prejudice. Please amend claims 1-3, 5, 13, 15 and 17 as indicated. A clean copy of the amended claims in accordance with 37 C.F.R. § 1.121(c)(i) is included herewith.

1. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

[a selection step of selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;]

[a] an encoding step of encoding [the] a speech segment by using [the selected] a plurality of encoding methods for encoding the speech segment; [and]

a calculation step of calculating an encoding distortion produced at said encoding step;

a selection step of selecting an encoding method of the plurality of encoding methods in which the encoding distortion is smallest; and

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded using the encoding method selected at said selection step, in [a] the speech segment dictionary.

2. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a first encoding step of encoding a speech segment;

a calculation step of calculating an encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step;

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said first encoding step in the speech segment dictionary, in a case where the encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step is less than a predetermined value;

a second encoding step of encoding the speech segment, in a case where the encoding distortion produced at said first encoding step is not less than the predetermined value; and
a storing step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said second encoding step in the speech segment dictionary.

[The method according the claim 1, wherein one of the plurality of encoding methods differs from other encoding methods in the number of quantization steps.]

3. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a construction step of constructing quantization code books using one or more speech segments;

an encoding step of encoding a speech segment using one of the quantization code books constructed in said construction step;

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said encoding step in the speech segment dictionary.

[The method according to claim 1, wherein one of the plurality of encoding methods differs from other encoding methods in a quantization code book.]

5. (Once Amended). [The method according to claim 1,] A speech information processing method of generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a selection step of selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;

an encoding step of encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;

and

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment in a speech segment dictionary,

wherein one of the plurality of encoding methods uses one of a μ -law scheme, scalar quantization, and linear predictive coding.

7. (Once Amended). A speech information processing apparatus for generating a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

selecting means for selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a plurality of encoding methods;

encoding means for encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;

[and]

calculation means for calculating an encoding distortion produced by said encoding means;

selection means for selecting an encoding method of the plurality of encoding methods in which the encoding distortion is smallest; and

storage means for storing the encoded speech segment encoded using the encoding method selected by said selection means, in [a] the speech segment dictionary.

13. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

[a selection step of selecting, from a plurality of decoding methods, a decoding method of decoding a speech segment read out from the speech segment dictionary;]

a decoding step of decoding the speech segment by using [the selected] a plurality of decoding methods for decoding the speech segment; [and]

a calculation step of calculating a decoding distortion produced in said decoding step;
a selection step of selecting a decoding method of the plurality of decoding methods in
which the decoding distortion is smallest; and

a speech synthesizing step of synthesizing speech on the basis of the decoded speech
segment decoded by the decoding method selected in said selection step.

15. (Once Amended). A speech information processing method of synthesizing speech by
using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of speech segments, comprising:

a construction step of constructing quantization code books using one or more speech
segments;

an encoding step of encoding a speech segment using one of the quantization code books
constructed in said construction step;

a storage step of storing the encoded speech segment encoded in said encoding step in the
speech segment dictionary.

[The method according to claim 13, wherein one of the plurality of decoding methods
differs from other decoding methods in a quantization code book.]

17. (Once Amended). [The method according to claim 13,] A speech information processing
method of synthesizing speech by using a speech segment dictionary for holding a plurality of
speech segments, comprising:

a selection step of selecting an encoding method of encoding a speech segment from a
plurality of encoding methods;

an encoding step of encoding the speech segment by using the selected encoding method;
and